

Well, this week, that process of joyous re-discovery and solemn remembrance happened all over again. It unfolded in countless reunions, planned and unplanned. As our people renewed old bonds, let us also join to resume the timeless work that brought us here in the first place and that brought our forebears together 200 years ago, the work of fortifying freedom's foundation and building a lasting peace for generations to come. I believe we can do it. It is the only ultimate tribute we can give for the ultimate lesson of World War II and Normandy.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:13 p.m. at the Palais Bourbon.

## Interview With the French Media in Paris

June 7, 1994

### Europe

**Q.** Are you disappointed with Europe today as opposed to the kind of determination it showed 50 years ago?

**President Clinton.** No. No, because I don't think the two situations are easily comparable; it's not the same thing. I think the real question is, how is Europe today as compared with after the Second World War or after the First World War? And I think the answer is, we're doing much better than we did after the First World War, in a roughly similar time, with a lot of uncertainty in the world but where no one's security seems to be immediately at risk.

I see Europe coming together politically, economically, in terms of security. I see more cooperation with the United States economically with GATT, in terms of security with NATO and the Partnership For Peace. I see us working together to try to deal with the problem of Bosnia. I know it has not been solved, but after all, some progress has been made. The conflict has been limited. The Croats and the Muslims have made an agreement. We are on the verge of getting a recommended territorial settlement from our contact group.

So I think that Europe is on the way to a better situation in the 21st century. Have

we solved all the problems? No. But I'm optimistic, especially after this trip.

[At this point, a question was asked and President François Mitterrand answered in French, but the translation was incomplete.]

### Bosnia

**Q.** I'd like to ask President Clinton a question, hoping that—[inaudible]—problem—[inaudible]—President of your country—[inaudible]—and he said that after 1919—[inaudible]—everything seems possible today. [Inaudible]—are coming out of a long period of—[inaudible]—this is the best—[inaudible]—perhaps one day he might ask your boys to intervene again, for instance, in Bosnia?

**President Clinton.** I do think the situation is similar to 1919, not the same but similar. But the difference is that in 1919, Europe did not unite and the United States withdrew. In 1994, Europe is growing together in terms of the economy and the political system and the security system, and the United States is still actively engaged in Europe.

Are there circumstances under which we might commit American troops? Absolutely, there are. First of all, we still have a NATO commitment, which we intend to honor. Secondly, we have already put our pilots at the disposal of NATO in Bosnia in enforcing the no-fly zone and in having the airlift for humanitarian reasons. We have troops in—

**Q.** [Inaudible]—more on the ground?

**President Clinton.** Well, we have troops in Macedonia also to limit the conflict. We have said we would put in troops to enforce an agreement if an agreement was made but that we did not believe the United States should go into Bosnia to try to resolve the conflict in favor of one side or the other. And I think if we were involved there now in the U.N. mission, it would only make for more controversy and increase the likelihood of the international community being pulled into the conflict.

If we can get the parties to agree—and I think President Mitterrand and I agree on this—if we can get the parties to agree to a settlement, then the United States is prepared to work with our allies to make sure that settlement is honored.

[President Mitterrand then responded in French, and two additional questions were asked and answered in French, and translations were not provided.]

### **Algeria**

**Q.** [In French; translation not provided.]

**President Clinton.** Let me make sure I understand your question by restating our position. We have tried to support the current government in working with France, for example, to reschedule their debt. But we have also encouraged this government to reach out to dissident groups who are not involved in terrorism, who disavow terrorism. We have had some very low-level contacts with people who, themselves, have not been involved in terrorism. We don't support people who pursue violent means like that anywhere, and we won't.

We hope that the present Algerian government will be able to broaden its base and reach out and deal with those with whom it has difficulties, who feel shut out, but who are committed to a peaceful resolution of these problems.

We are very concerned about the rise of militant fundamentalism in the Islamic states. And the potential is enormous. There are—17 of the 22 Islamic states in the world have declining incomes. Seventy percent of the Muslims in the world today are young people. The potential for explosion is great. And we have a great stake in promoting governments like the Moroccan government, for example. King Hassan has run a very responsible regime, has been helpful in peace in the Middle East, in many other ways. And we share the concern that the French have for the potential of the situation in Algeria getting out of hand. But what the United States wants to do is to stand up against terrorism and against destructive fundamentalism, but to stand with the people of Islam who wish to be full members of the world community, according to the rules that all civilized people should follow.

### **Rwanda**

**Q.** [In French; translation not provided.]

**President Clinton.** No, but we're willing to help. We have already offered several million dollars in aid. And we have discussed

with our friends in Africa the prospect of an African force, which we would help to finance and which we would also support with personnel equipment and other armored equipment and other transportation assistance. We are in a position to help there, and I think we should.

But I think many of the African nations are interested in trying to provide troops and helping to provide the manpower in that region. I think that is about all we can do at this time when we have troops in Korea, troops in Europe, the possibility of new commitments in Bosnia if we can achieve a peace agreement, and also when we are working very hard to try to put the U.N. agreement in Haiti back on track, which was broken.

However, we do want very much to try to help in Rwanda. And we are prepared to help to finance it and to provide the armored support necessary if the African nations will provide the troops. I don't think it would take all that many troops to stop a lot of this fighting if several African nations would go in together and do it.

[A question was asked, and President Mitterrand answered in French, and a translation was not provided.]

**President Clinton.** If I might make one point about that. One of the things we learned in Somalia, where we were able to save hundreds of thousands of lives and where we lost some of our people, most of them in one unfortunate incident, was that even a humanitarian mission will inevitably be caught up in the politics of a country, unless people are starving and dying because of a natural disaster. If there is not a natural disaster causing all this human misery, then there is some politics behind people dying.

So in this case, where it's even more obvious, that is, Rwanda—even more obvious what the political and military problems are than in Somalia—I think the U.N. was very wise in asking the African countries to take the lead because they will be there over the long run. That is where the partnerships must be built. That is where the national territorial boundaries must be respected. And countries like France and the United States should support them. But I think this is an important test for them. And if they can do

it, it will mean much more over the long run to Africa.

*Q. [In French; translation not provided.]*

**President Clinton.** Yes.

*[At this point, two questions were asked, and President Mitterrand answered in French, and a translation was not provided.]*

### **International Economy**

**President Clinton.** I think this recommendation grows out of the work Mr. Delors has been doing about the problem of growth in Europe and generating jobs. And this is a problem, of course, that we will be taking up in another month when the G-7 meets in Naples, discussing this. There are many people, thoughtful people, who believe that there is a disconnection, if you will, between the real economy—that is, the economy in which people get up and go to work every day—and what happens in the financial markets and that perhaps the financial markets overreact to a little bit of growth, run the interest rates up, and then shut growth off before there is a real danger of inflation. So this is something which ought to be discussed.

Now, whether there could ever be an economic security council, I don't know. Keep in mind the Security Council of the U.N. deals with a whole range of different issues on a case-by-case basis. We would have to think, what would the jurisdiction be; what could be done?

But what Mr. Delors is doing, as he normally does, is asking us to think hard about a real problem for which there is presently no response in the global community. So I applaud him, but I can't say I have thought it through enough to endorse the idea.

### **Foreign Aid**

*Q. [In French; translation not provided.]*

**President Clinton.** Well, we're prepared to invest quite a lot in it. We have brought down our defense budget quite a lot, from my point of view, as much as I think we should cut it. So I'm having discussions with my Congress now, asking them not to cut the defense budget any more and also to provide good increases in aid to many of the states of the former Soviet Union, not simply Russia but also Ukraine and other of those

new countries. Now, we have a big stake in their success, also Eastern Europe. A lot of what needs to be done is in the way of assuring the success of their private economies and getting more investment and trade going.

But I think we should—all the countries of the West need to be very concerned that now that communism is gone, what rises up in its place succeeds. You don't want them to go back to sort of a precommunist state of almost hostility toward the rest of the world. So the market economy has to begin to take hold there and has to succeed for ordinary people. And we should help it do that.

*[A question was asked and President Mitterrand answered in French, and a translation was not provided.]*

### **International Economy**

*Q. [In French; translation not provided.]*

**President Clinton.** Well, first of all, let me say that there is no simple answer to this. The United States has somewhat more flexible labor markets than most European countries inasmuch as the unemployment benefits, for example, are less generous and the average payroll cost, over and above wages, tends to be lower. That may be one of the reasons that even with a relatively open economy, we have a lower unemployment rate. But keep in mind, we pay a price for that. We have lower unemployment, but we also have had very little growth in wages over the last 20 years. And the inequality, the gap in earnings between the richest Americans and the middle class has been growing. And that's not a good thing for democracy.

So I think what I hope we can do through the G-7, and perhaps through the OECD, is to really look at what all of us do individually about this problem, and see if we can reach the best conclusion about how you can maximize employment and still be fair to middle-income earners.

Let me also say that I think over the long run, we will have to involve these labor questions and environmental questions in our trade dealings with the developing nations. That is, they should want not only investment from our countries and us to buy their products but also they should want the wage base

in their own countries to grow at a reasonable rate.

*[President Mitterrand then responded in French, and a translation was not provided.]*

### **Media Criticism**

*Q. [In French; translation not provided.]*

**President Clinton.** Well, let me say, every time I'm in Paris, I love being here. And yesterday, when I heard President Mitterrand make his wonderful speech, I envied the French. But I love my country. I don't like everything about our political system. And if you have a very broad range of freedom of speech, sometimes that freedom is abused, not only in getting into areas that shouldn't be gotten into, but sometimes you don't even have the truth.

But that's just all part of it. I trust that, in the end, that our democracy will work its way through this. And all I can do is get up every day and do my job for the American people. I do the very best I can every day, and I'll let them worry about the attacks on me. If I weren't trying to change the country, if I weren't trying to do things that I believe will advance our country, then the people who oppose me wouldn't be attacking me, personally or otherwise. So I take it as a compliment and go on.

*Q. [In French; translation not provided.]*

**President Clinton.** Well, I have a pretty thick hide. You have to have a high pain threshold to be in politics in America today. But I say—on the book there, if people don't like my process—I like to get people together around a table and let everybody say what they want and argue and debate and fight. And I think that's the way ideas get fleshed out in a new and difficult time. I don't think you can have a hidebound decisionmaking process when you're entering a world where no one has the answers.

But I'll say this, let my critics answer the results: We have 3.3 million jobs in 16 months; the unemployment rate is down over a point and a half; the growth rate is up. Let them criticize my economic decisionmaking. We produce results. That's all that matters. The American people are better off, and we're going in the right direction. And so I can stand criticism if the results are there.

*Q. [In French; translation not provided.]*

**President Clinton.** I like that. *[Laughter]*

### **American Political System**

*Q. [In French; translation not provided.]*

**President Clinton.** Well, perhaps, although the American people are more jealous of their executive power. I think if they lengthen the term of the President, they would only let him serve one term.

Four years has really, normally has been enough. Now, in my case, there was really no honeymoon; I mean, they started campaigning immediately after I took office. But that's all part of it. I still think the more important thing is to keep sharply focused on achieving results for the people you represent.

There are pluses and minuses to every system; there is no perfect political system. The challenge of democracy today is to mobilize people's energies enough to get things done. The real problem is, everywhere in countries, there are so many forces working against doing anything when what we need to do is to move on these problems, not just to talk about them but to do things. And that has been my whole orientation.

### **President's Goals**

*Q. [In French; translation not provided.]*

**President Clinton.** Yes. Well, I want my country to go into the 21st century still strong and healthy, not just economically but spiritually. I want us to have stronger communities. I want us to be together, even though we're very diverse. And I want us to be engaged in the world, leading, playing a positive role. That is what I want. I think that's what we all want. That's what democracy should be able to produce in this time.

### **Hillary Clinton**

*Q. [In French; translation not provided.]*

**President Clinton.** I don't know. She's a very able person. But she always told me, as long as we've been together, that she never wanted to run for office herself, that that was never one of the—she loves many jobs. And she works like crazy. She works very hard on things that she passionately believes in. But from the first time I met her, she always said she never wanted to run for elected of-

fice. The more I do it, the more I understand why. [Laughter]

[A question was asked, and President Mitterrand answered in French, and a translation was not provided.]

*Q.* [In French; translation not provided.]  
**President Clinton.** Thank you.

*Q.* [In French; translation not provided.]  
**President Clinton.** Bill, Mr. President, either one.

*Q.* [In French; translation not provided.]  
**President Clinton.** You know more about that than I do.

Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 8:05 p.m. at the Elysée Palace with Patrick Poivre d'Arvor, TF1, and Christine Ockrent, FRANCE 2 television. In his remarks, the President referred to Jacques Delors, President, European Commission.

### Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by President François Mitterrand in Paris

June 7, 1994

Mr. President, Madame Mitterrand, Mr. Prime Minister, Madame Balladur, distinguished citizens of France, my fellow Americans, and honored guests, this week, as our two nations mark the 50th anniversary of D-Day and the battles of World War II, I'm glad to have this chance to note the special place France will always have in America's heart. So many of our greatest sons and daughters have shared that attachment. Our first two ministers to this great land were Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. Franklin Roosevelt loved France. So did John and Jacqueline Kennedy.

As President, every day as I go to work I am reminded of the bonds between our two nations. The park across the street from the White House is Lafayette Park. No statue in all of Washington stands closer to the Oval Office itself than that of Rochambeau. Today we're building new bonds between our republics as we work together to address the great endeavors of our time, many of which the President has already outlined, building bridges toward the East, opening the world markets, doing what we can to support de-

mocracy, working to strengthen the NATO Alliance and to unify Europe through the Partnership For Peace, cooperating to address the most difficult and painful conflicts of this era. Mr. President, the United States supports a strong Europe, an integrated Europe, a Europe with political and economic and security unity and singleness of purpose with its appreciation of diversity.

We wish to be partners with you in the common struggles of the 21st century. The fact that we have sometimes a difficult partnership makes it all the more interesting and also makes some things in life less necessary.

Our wonderful Founding Father, Benjamin Franklin, once said, "Our enemies are our friends, for they show us our faults." Sometimes with the French and the Americans we no longer need enemies. [Laughter] But it is always in the spirit of goodwill and brotherhood.

I can honestly say that with every passing day of my Presidency I come to appreciate France more, the strength, the will, the vision, the possibilities of genuine partnership. I think it is our common destiny, as you alluded, Mr. President, to see that our countries remain forever young, forever restless, forever questing, forever looking for new hills to climb, new challenges to meet, new problems to solve.

As I was preparing for this visit, I was given something by another of America's greatest admirers of your nation, our Ambassador, Mrs. Harriman. She sent me a poem composed in memory of the gallant soldiers who died on D-Day, from the members of the Allied effort to storm the beaches of Normandy to the shadow warriors of the French Resistance and the Free French army, without whom Europe would not be free today. Here it is:

Went the day well.

We died and never knew.

But well or ill,

Freedom, we died for you.

Mr. President, the United States and France are destined forever to be the beacons of freedom for the entire world. Please join me now in a toast to the democratic spirit of our beloved nations, to the heroes of D-Day whose sacrifices we came to honor, and to the proposition that the spirit of liberty